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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 001172

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SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER OU DISCUSSES TAIWAN'S NEW UN STRATEGY

Classified By: AIT Director Stephen M. Young,
Reasons: 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C) Summary: Foreign Minister Ou told the Director on August 7 that Taiwan plans to have its allies co-sponsor a proposal on Taiwan's "meaningful participation" in UN specialized agencies at this year's UNGA General Committee meeting. Taiwan is hoping for limited discussion and a mild PRC reaction to its proposal, which it expects to fail in the General Committee. Ou requested the U.S. to support Taiwan's appeal for meaningful participation in UN specialized agencies, particularly its bid for WHA observership, and to encourage a low-key reaction from the PRC. The Director said he would forward Taiwan's request to Washington and pass back any response. End Summary.

¶2. (U) Foreign Minister Ou delivered talking points on Taiwan's UN strategy for this year to the Director in an August 7 meeting at MOFA. (Talking points faxed to EAP/TC.) Ou was accompanied by Vice Foreign Minister David Lin and MOFA Director General of International Organizations Paul Chang.

Meaningful Participation and Avoiding Confrontation

¶3. (C) In explaining Taiwan's new approach, VFM Lin said the Ma administration feels it must respond to domestic support for Taiwan's UN campaign, but also wants to reduce confrontation with the PRC on the issue. It hopes to do this by coordinating with the PRC through informal NSC channels and by encouraging friends, like the U.S. and Japan, to urge Beijing to understand Taiwan's desire to avoid any serious reaction. Lin pointed out that Taiwan's new approach, emphasizing participation in specialized agencies rather than rejoining the UN itself, is in line with President Ma's August 4 foreign policy speech at MOFA. (Note: In addition to the WHO and WHA, Taiwan's talking points also mention the International Maritime Organization (IMO), to which Taiwan has no direct access.)

¶4. (C) The proposal to be co-sponsored by Taiwan's diplomatic allies is entitled: "Need to examine the fundamental rights of the 23 million people of the Republic

of China (Taiwan) to participate meaningfully in the activities of the United Nations specialized agencies." The proposal will be delivered to the UN Secretariat on August 14. Taiwan plans for one or two proxies (diplomatic allies) to submit its proposal as a supplementary item at the September 16 closed-door UN General Committee meeting, and thereby avoid any serious debate. Ou said Taiwan hopes for a neutral statement by this year's chair, Nicaragua, to the effect that a consensus could not be reached and therefore the issue would not be forwarded to the UNGA.

Taiwan Requests U.S. Support

15. (C) Lin expressed hope the U.S. would "echo" Taiwan's desire to moderate the historically tense back-and-forth between Taipei and Beijing on the UN issue. Although Lin believed Beijing should be aware of Taiwan's intentions after Ma's August 4 speech, he hoped the U.S. would encourage the PRC to mute its reaction at the UN GC meeting this year. Lin also expressed hope the U.S. would support Taiwan's participation in the WHO and observership at the WHA and would "take a more neutral stance" as Taiwan searched for an amicable solution to the UN issue. Both Ou and Lin welcomed the Director's suggestion that perhaps the U.S. could work with Taiwan on gaining a voice in the International Maritime and International Civil Aviation Organizations.

How Will Beijing Respond to Taiwan's New Approach?

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16. (C) The Director said he would forward Taiwan's talking points and request to Washington and would pass back any response. He noted that the success of Taiwan's new approach will depend on Beijing. Despite Chinese President Hu Jintao's more positive rhetoric on cross-Straits relations, a low-key response at the UN General Committee meeting would require the Foreign Ministry in Beijing to send special instructions to its representatives - a development that is not yet clear. The Director suggested that Beijing's reaction to President Ma's upcoming trip to Paraguay and the Dominican Republic would be an indication of the PRC's willingness to take a more flexible approach toward Taiwan on "international space" issues, including Taiwan's new UN strategy.

YOUNG